Technical Assistance to Government of Gujarat for undertaking studies in the following areas:

(i) Gujarat Public Sector Resource Management.

(ii) Gujarat Industrial Investment Corporation.

(iii) Gujarat State Power Sector.

For the present, a proposal for a possible loan assistance from the ADB for 'Gujarat Public Sector Resource Management Programme' is under process. The details, including the loan amount will be known after the negotiations are finalised and the agreements are signed.

Introduction of direct flight from Bhubaneshwar to Mumbai

1623. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Orissa has been repeatedly asking for introduction of direct flight from Bhubaneshwar to Mumbai to improve trade and commerce in the State;

(b) whether such a service has been introduced in the past; and

(c) by when this service would be re-introduced in the interest of the State and its people?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Due to crew constraint, Indian Airlines has at present, no plans to re-introduce services on the sector Bhubaneshwar-Mumbai. Private operators are, however, encouraged to add more stations in their network.

Private and Foreign Countries Entering into Insurance Sector

1624. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether under duress of international financial institutions Government are allowing private and foreign companies to enter the insurance sector in the country as reported in the Indian Express dated 6th July, 1996;

(b) whether this decision will lead to rampant corruption, frauds, embezzlement and draining of funds out of the country as alleged by General Insurance Companies/Life Insurance Corporation Unions who are likely to launch countrywide stir; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to reconsider its decision and consult Unions of GIC/LIC to avoid confrontation?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Common Minimum Programme (CMP) of the Government envisages restructuring of the insurance industry in the light of the experience gained in the working of the banking sector, and strengthening of public sector insurance companies i.e. LIC and GIC.

Reasons of Boom/Down in Share Market

1625. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons of boom/down of the prices in share market;

(b) whether excessive forward trading amounting to almost gambling is one of the main causes;

(c) if so, the mechanism to check this excessive boom/down so that the interest of small share holders is protected;

and changes in policies, transactions by large Institutional investors including Foreign Institutional investors and capital market trends overseas.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), which has statutory powers over the stock exchanges and stock brokers, is keeping a constant watch on the trading in securities in stock exchanges for ensuring the safety of the market and for protecting the interests of the investors. A Surveillance Department has also been set up in SEBI for monitoring abnormal variations in the prices of shares in the stock exchanges and for initiating suitable action as may be warranted.

(e) Does not arise in view of answer to (c) and (d) above.

Payment by Jallandhar Doordarshan artists for preparation of Bills

1626. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the artists of Jallandhar Doordarshan were subjected to pay a huge chunk of their earning from presentation of programmes for preparation of bills;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard to prevent such malpractices in future; and

(d) whether any such complaints were received from other studios, if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM): (a) and (b) No specific complaint in this regard has been received by the Doordarshan Directorate.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

Letters by MPs regarding lapses in Banks

1627. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the Members of Parliament have written letters to Government regarding the serious lapses in the private and public sector banks and have sought information on important aspects;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Govt. thereon; and

(c) how many of the letters have been replied so far and by when the remaining letters will be replied?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) Hon'ble Members of Parliament have been writing letters to the Government from time to time with regard to the various aspects of the functioning of private sector and public sector banks. The points raised in these letters are normally got examined by the banks concerned and/or RBI. Since a large number of letters have been received, over a long period of time it is not possible to immediately indicate how many of them have been replied to. The general practice is that replies are sent after the requisite information is received from the concerned bank or from RBI.

(d) whether creation of SEBI has at all served the above purpose; and

(e) if not, what other mechanism is contemplated to check this excessive boom/downward trend?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The more important factors contributing to fluctuations in the prices of shares in the